CLAIMS

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A connector assembly for releasably affixing a lead to an implantable medical device, the lead comprising a lead body, the connector assembly comprising:

a support;

a side clamp defining with said support confronting surfaces configured to receive a proximal end portion of the lead body; and

a fastener adapted to be received by the support for urging the side clamp toward the support and for clamping the proximal end portion of the lead body between said confronting surfaces.

2. The connector assembly of claim 1 in which:

the confronting surfaces on the side clamp and the support define a port.

3. The connector assembly of claim 1 in which:

the confronting surfaces comprise confronting channels formed in the side clamp and the support.

4. The connector assembly of claim 3 in which:

the confronting channels are symmetrically disposed about a plane of symmetry.

5. The connector assembly of claim 3 in which:

one of the channels is larger in cross section than the other channel.

6. The connector assembly of claim 1 in which:
the support comprises a molded part.

7. The connector assembly of claim 1 in which:
the side clamp comprises a molded part.

8. The connector assembly of claim 1 in which:
the fastener extends through the side clamp and is threadedly received by the support.

9. The connector assembly of claim 8 in which:
the support carries a retainer for inhibiting the removal of the fastener from the support.

10. The connector assembly of claim 9 in which:
the fastener comprises a threaded end including at least one notch extending along the length of the threaded end; and
the retainer has a central opening configured to permit the threaded end of the fastener to be withdrawn through the retainer when the fastener and retainer have a predetermined angular alignment.

11. The connector assembly of claim 9 in which:
the fastener comprises a threaded end; and
the retainer comprises internal threads matching the threads on the fastener end.

12. The connector assembly of claim 1 in which:

the fastener extends through the side clamp and is threadedly received by an insert carried by the support.

13. The connector assembly of claim 12 in which:

the support comprises a molded part and the insert is comolded with the support.

14. The connector assembly of claim 1 in which:

the side clamp and the support define additional confronting surfaces configured to receive the proximal end portion of an additional lead body, the fastener being adapted to urge the side clamp toward the support to clamp the proximal end portion of the additional confronting surfaces.

15. The connector assembly of claim 1 further comprising:

a top clamp defining with said support confronting surfaces configured to receive the proximal end portion of an additional lead body; and

a fastener adapted to be received by the support for urging the top clamp toward the support and for clamping the proximal end portion of the additional lead body between the confronting surfaces defined by the top clamp and the support.

16. A connector assembly for releasably affixing a lead on an implantable medical device, the lead including a lead body having a proximal end portion carrying at least one electrical terminal, the connector assembly comprising:

a receptacle for receiving the proximal end portion of the lead body, the receptacle carrying an electrical contact positioned to engage the at least one electrical terminal, the receptacle comprising a port defined by a support and a side clamp; and

a fastener adapted to be received by the support for urging the side clamp toward said support for clamping the proximal end portion of the lead body within the port.

17. The connector assembly of claim 16 in which:

the port is defined by confronting channels in the side clamp and the support.

18. The connector assembly of claim 16 in which:

the receptacle is configured to receive the proximal end portion of a pacing and/or sensing lead.

19. The connector assembly of claim 16 in which:

the receptacle is configured to receive the proximal end portion of a cardioverting and/or defibrillating lead.

20. The connector assembly of claim 16 in which:

the fastener comprises a screw extending through the side clamp and threadedly received by the support.

21. The connector assembly of claim 20 in which:

the support includes a retainer for inhibiting the removal of the fastener from the support when the screw is loosened to release the proximal end portion of the lead body.

22. The connector assembly of claim 21 in which:

the fastener comprises a threaded end including at least one notch extending along the length of the threaded end; and

the retainer has a central opening configured to permit the threaded end of the fastener to be withdrawn through the retainer when the fastener and retainer have a predetermined angular alignment.

23. The connector assembly of claim 21 in which:

the fastener comprises a threaded end; and

the retainer comprises internal threads matching the threads on the fastener end.

24. The connector assembly of claim 16 in which:

a top clamp defining with said support confronting surfaces configured to receive the proximal end portion of an additional lead body; and

a fastener adapted to be received by the support for urging the top clamp toward the support and for clamping the proximal end portion of the additional lead body between the confronting surfaces defined by the top clamp and the support.

25. An implantable medical device comprising:

a sealed casing;

electronic circuitry enclosed within said casing; and

a connector assembly attached to the outside of said casing for releasably affixing a lead comprising a lead body having a proximal end portion carrying at least one electrical terminal and for electrically coupling the at least one electrical terminal to the electronic circuitry, the connector assembly comprising:

a support;

a side clamp defining with said support confronting surfaces configured to receive the proximal end portion of the lead body; and

a fastener adapted to be received by the support for urging the side clamp toward the support and for clamping the proximal end portion of the lead body between said confronting surfaces.